

Representative Sinrud and members of the House Appropriations Committee,

For the record, my name is Darrell Rud, Executive Director of the School Administrators of Montana. I am in support of HB566, sponsored by Representative Hollenbaugh, which would, in part, "build capacity for the care, education, and safety of Montana's children after school....."!

As a former school principal for 26 years, including being a leader of several schools with quality after school programs, I can attest that, in this fast-paced society, these programs are a true necessity for children, their parents, and communities. Many of these communities have traffic safety issues, lack safe situations for children to walk home from school, have the children ineligible for bussing due to where they live and some cities and towns have significant child safety challenges including, but not limited to, having some "savory characters" that live in the vicinity of schools. Having a quality after-school program increases the likelihood that children will be safe until older siblings get out of school, parents get away from their jobs to pick up their children, or innumerable other unique circumstances.

This bill, if approved, would increase the opportunities for funding, through competitive grants, in order to establish additional quality after-school programs across our state.

As I will be unable to attend Monday's scheduled hearing, please consider this "e-testimony" as a sincere advocacy for the welfare of our Montana students.

Respectfully submitted,

Darrell Rud

Executive Director  
School Administrators of Montana  
1134 Butte Avenue  
Helena, MT 59601  
Phone: 406-442-2510  
Fax: 406-442-2518  
<http://sammt.org>



March 16, 2007

RE: HB 566 (With proposed amendments)

Dear Supporters,

We are writing in support of HB 566 with proposed amendments.

Since its inception in 1998, the Boys & Girls Club of Dawson County has been in the forefront of youth development in our community. Our mission is *"To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens."* We actively seek to enrich the lives of girls and boys ages 5-19 whom other youth serving agencies have had difficulty reaching, and are dedicated to ensuring that all youth have access to quality after-school programs and services that will enhance their lives and shape their future.

Nearly 70% of our communities school aged youth benefit from trained, caring, professional staff and volunteers who help young people take control of their lives, envision productive futures, and achieve their goals. All Club after-school programs are designed to promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling in each a sense of competence, a sense of usefulness, a sense of belonging, and a sense of power or influence in the world around them.

We are at substantial risk of losing or having in such a reduced capacity that our community's well being will suffer increased tragedies. While our long range plan is for local sustainability, at this time our community is not able to sustain this service without your help

Please help us keep our after-school program available to Montana's youth!

Sincerely,



Valerie Limesand  
Executive Director

***The Positive Place For Kids***

Boys & Girls Club of Dawson County • P.O. Box 875 • Glendive, MT 59330 • (406) 365-7999



Big Sky High School • C. S. Porter Middle School • Meadow Hill Middle School  
 Hellgate High School • Sentinel High School  
 Willard Alternative High School • Washington Middle School  
 Hawthorne Elementary School • Franklin Elementary School  
 Lowell Elementary School

A Program of Turning Point

1325 Wyoming St. • Missoula, MT 59801 • Phone: (406) 532-9827 • Fax: (406) 541-3032  
 email: [rbuzzas@wmmhc.org](mailto:rbuzzas@wmmhc.org) or check out the website at [www.flagshipprogram.org](http://www.flagshipprogram.org)

March 16, 2007  
 House Appropriations Committee  
 State Capitol Building, Room 102  
 Helena, MT 59620

Re: Testimony on HB 566

Dear Chairman Sinrud and Members of The House Appropriations Committee,

Please accept this letter as testimony in support of HB 566, presented by Representative Galen Hollenbaugh. As a member of the Montana Afterschool Network and Director of The Flagship Program( an after-school program that has been operating in Missoula for the past eleven years), I have witnessed first hand the incredible need for and the positive results of providing high-quality learning and developmental opportunities for Montana's young people during the high-risk hours of after-school and summer. Our program is a good example of a community-school partnership that serves over 4,000 students per year in over 600 educational and developmental activities.

Our program has been involved in two national evaluations of quality after-school programs and the evidence is clear. Kids who are involved in after-school programs do better in school are less likely to engage in risk activities such as use of alcohol and other drugs, form stronger positive peer and adult relationships and realize opportunities that they may not have previously thought were available to them. In tracking MPNA (Montana Prevention Needs Assessment) survey results over the past six cycles, we have seen an increased attachment to school and lower rate of alcohol use by minors. It costs just over \$100 per year for a young person to participate in our program. We think that's a pretty good investment in our youth and we hope that you will agree.

My interest in this bill is that we need to make after-school programs available to more families in more communities across Montana. Funding through this proposal would allow the Montana Afterschool Network to assist communities in developing and sustaining after-school programs across the state in communities that want to offer these services.

I would encourage you to accept the amendments being offered in New Sections 5, 6 and New Section – Section 7 that put language in the bill recognizing the Montana Afterschool Network vs. program participants, as the logical group to do this work. An additional amendment would come under New Section Section 2 that specifies "Afterschool program grants." The original intent of this bill was that a great majority of the funds - \$375,000 to be precise – be allocated as grants directly to communities who want to develop or sustain programs. Please vote yes on this bill as amended.

Sincerely yours,

*Rosie Buzzas*  
 Rosie Buzzas, Director

Friends of Flagship Advisory Board

Dick Shull • Macrae Peeples • Don Simmons • John Engen • Molly Galusha • Bill "Moose" Petritz • Pat Simmons  
 John Sommers-Flanagan • Mark Ward • Paulette Ferguson • Craig Michels • Kelly Williams, Judy Wing, Peg Shea •